

# FOUNDATIONS IN INDUSTRY TRAINING (FIT) GRANT

Program Guidelines  
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pennsylvania  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY  
& ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



# Table of Contents

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<b>Section I – General</b>	<b>1</b>
A. Statement of Purpose	1
<b>Section II – Eligibility</b>	<b>1</b>
A. Eligible Applicants (Sponsor)	1
B. Eligible Uses of Funds	2
C. Ineligible Uses of Funds	2
D. Distribution of Funds	3
E. Grant Limitations	3
<b>Section III – Application Procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Section IV – Application Evaluation</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Section V – Procedures for Accessing Funds</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Section VI – Annual Activity and Project Closeout Reports</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Section VII – Program Requirements</b>	<b>4</b>
A. Nondiscrimination	4
B. Conflict of Interest	4
C. Project Records	5
D. Worker Safety	5
<b>Section VIII – Budgets, Budget Revisions and Invoicing</b>	<b>5</b>
A. Budget Revisions	5
B. Invoices	5
<b>Section IX – Program Inquiries</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Appendix I – Supplemental Information</b>	<b>7</b>

## Section I – General

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### A. Statement of Purpose

Throughout the commonwealth, employers have reported difficulty with finding qualified candidates who satisfy specific skill requirements. Registered Apprenticeship is an employer-driven model that enables employers to provide customized training developed according to their particular talent need. Additionally, apprenticeships provide job seekers with a structured career pathway that enables them to concurrently earn wages while acquiring skills.

The Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) **Foundations in Industry Training** (Program) is a statewide program offering assistance to Registered Apprenticeship Programs which foster high quality training. The overall Program goal is to increase apprenticeship availability to Pennsylvania employers to help support them with their talent recruitment and development needs. The program assists with the related instruction that complements on the job training to deliver the technical and academic competencies that apply to the job.

Grants under this program are processed under the authority of Section 3 of the Act of May 10, 1939 (P.L. 111, No. 51), known as the Commerce Law, which authorizes the Department of Community and Economic Development to undertake ways and means of promoting and encouraging the prosperous development of Pennsylvania business, industry and commerce, of expanding markets and promoting and developing new markets for Pennsylvania products, to encourage the location and development of new business, industry and commerce within the commonwealth, to aid in restoring employment in communities affected by unemployment, and to assist persons, firms, associations, political subdivisions, corporations, cooperative associations and other organizations in the execution of its duties and functions under the Act. Funding for this program was provided under the General Appropriations Act of 2023 (Act 1A of 2023; HB 611, PN 1811).

## Section II – Eligibility

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### A. Eligible Applicants (Sponsor)

Any sponsor operating an apprenticeship program in the commonwealth, irrespective of whether the sponsor employs the apprentice, is eligible to apply. The apprenticeship program must be registered with the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry's (L&I) Apprenticeship and Training Office (ATO) and evidenced by a certificate of registration.

To become a registered apprenticeship program sponsor, please contact the ATO at [apprenticeship@pa.gov](mailto:apprenticeship@pa.gov). The ATO was established to increase the commonwealth's involvement in the overall growth of Registered Apprenticeship. Its goals are to increase outreach efforts to those who are unaware of the benefits of Registered Apprenticeship, provide technical assistance to new and existing programs, expand the registered apprenticeship model to the non-traditional occupations, and to extend apprenticeship opportunities to under-represented communities.

Every registered apprenticeship program has a sponsor. The sponsor is responsible for the overall operation of the program. DCED will accept grant proposals from apprenticeship sponsors that demonstrate an employer(s) connection to the program and are actively involved in the apprenticeship program. Proposals will be accepted from the following:

- Single Employer
- Employer Consortia



- Workforce Development Boards
- Economic Development Organizations
- Labor Organizations
- Career and Technical Education Institutions
- Post-Secondary Academic Institutions
- Community Organizations or Associations

Partnerships and collaboration among the groups listed above are highly encouraged.

## **B. Eligible Uses of Funds**

Funding is provided to eligible applicants (sponsors) to reach the ultimate goal of increasing apprenticeship accessibility across the commonwealth. Eligible uses of funds are expenses related to instruction that complements on-the-job training, delivering the technical and academic competencies that apply to the job. Eligible costs include:

1. Hourly salary of an in-house instructor(s) for actual hours in training that complements on-the-job learning.
2. Costs of books and training materials.
3. Contracted professional services directly related to the academic competency that apply to the job of each apprentice.
4. General education requirements towards a college degree and credit courses towards completion of degree work directly related to the apprenticeship.
5. Sustaining training that complements on-the-job learning included in existing apprenticeship programs.
6. Regional domestic travel for trainers who are directly related to the project. Travel expenses should be incurred consistent with DCED's travel policy or the sponsor's travel policy, provided it has been pre-approved by DCED.
7. Administrative support not to exceed 10% of the total grant amount.
8. Other expenses deemed eligible by DCED.

## **C. Ineligible Uses of Funds**

1. Funds may not be used to support indirect costs (Costs not related to instruction that complements on-the-job training, delivering the technical and academic competencies that apply to the job), alcohol, entertainment, and other unallowable expenses as listed in state guidance.
2. Funds may not be used to procure lobbying services or pay fines or reparations resulting from lawsuits, citations, or regulatory actions.
3. Funds may not be used to support the salary or benefit package paid to the apprentice(s).
4. Out-of-state and foreign travel.
5. Costs incurred outside of the activity period identified in the formal grant contract between DCED and the applicant.
6. Other expenses deemed ineligible by DCED.

## **D. Distribution of Funds**

1. Total funding cannot exceed the DCED mandated employer cap of \$3,000 per apprentice per year. Costs incurred above this amount are the responsibility of the employer. Administrative support of 10% can be requested in addition to the max of \$3,000 per apprentice.
2. Each employer may not request funding for more than five apprentices per year, for up to three years. Group model apprenticeship programs may request funding for up to 30 apprentices; however, no more than five apprentices may be placed with a single employer.
3. When invoicing, all expenditures must be submitted on the requisition form provided by DCED and include supporting documentation. Funds are distributed on a reimbursement basis. The final grant invoice should be submitted within 60 days of the closeout contract date.

## **E. Grant Limitations**

1. Grant awards are contingent upon the availability of funding.
2. The sponsor understands that this program is funded with public tax dollars and certain information about the company's participation may be made available to the public.
3. Guidelines are subject to change without notice.

Funds must be used on expenses related to support for Pennsylvania residents and Pennsylvania based employers.

# **Section III – Application Procedures**

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Applications will be accepted and evaluated on an ongoing basis with awards made to eligible applicants for as long as funds are available. Grantees can request funding for up to three years in the request.

To apply for funding, the applicant must submit the electronic on-line PA Department of Community and Economic Development Single Application for Assistance located at [dc.ed.pa.gov/singleapp](https://dc.ed.pa.gov/singleapp). Required supplemental information outlined in Appendix I of these guidelines must be attached electronically to the application as directed on the Addenda tab. For technical inquiries regarding the submission of the on-line application, contact the Customer Service Center at (800) 379-7448 or (717) 787-3405.

# **Section IV – Application Evaluation**

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1. Applicants seeking Foundations in Industry Training funds will be evaluated and reviewed by DCED.
2. Approval for all proposal project changes rests with DCED.
3. All activities must be in compliance with DCED policies, contracts, and guidelines.
4. DCED reserves the right to ask applicants to revise applications..

## Section V – Procedures for Accessing Funds

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1. If approved, a commitment letter will be electronically issued to the applicant.
2. Following the execution of a grant contract, funds will be disbursed to grantees on a reimbursement basis. (See Section VIII(B) Invoices)

## Section VI – Annual Activity and Project Closeout Reports

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**Annual Activity Report:** Reporting to the Department will be on an annual basis. Annual Activity Reports, with performance metrics, shall be submitted electronically to the Office of Workforce Development by July 31st to report on the prior fiscal year's (July 1-June 30) grant activity. DCED will provide the template for the report.

**Project Closeout Report:** A final program report is required at the completion of the contracted timeframe, describing the final outcomes benefitting the apprentice(s) and the company, as well as a final financial closeout report. DCED will provide the template for the final grant program closeout report and the grant financial closeout report. Both reports are to be submitted electronically to the Office of Workforce Development within 60 days following the end date of the contract.

## Section VII – Program Requirements

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### A. Nondiscrimination

No assistance shall be awarded to an applicant under this program unless the applicant certifies that the applicant shall not discriminate against any employee or against any person seeking employment by reason of race, gender, creed, color, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or in violation of the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religious creed, ancestry, age, sex, national origin, handicap or disability, or in violation of any applicable federal laws. All contracts for work to be paid with grant funds must contain the commonwealth's official nondiscrimination clause.

### B. Conflict of Interest

An officer, director, or employee of an applicant who is a party to or has a private interest in a project shall disclose the nature and extent of the interest to the governing body of the applicant and may not vote on action of the applicant concerning the project, nor participate in the deliberations of the applicant concerning the project.

### C. Project Records

The applicant must maintain full and accurate records with respect to the project and must ensure adequate control over related parties in the project. The program office requires access to such records, as well as the ability to inspect all work, invoices, materials, and other relevant records at reasonable times and places.

Upon request of the program office, the applicant must furnish all data, reports, contracts, documents, and other information relevant to the project.

### D. Worker Safety

Pursuant to Executive Order 2021-06, Worker Protection and Investment (October 21, 2021), the Commonwealth is responsible for ensuring that every Pennsylvania worker has a safe and healthy work environment and the protections afforded them through labor laws. To that end, contractors and grantees of the Commonwealth must certify that they are in compliance with all applicable Pennsylvania state labor and workforce safety laws. Such certification shall be made through the Worker Protection and Investment Certification Form (BOP-2201) and submitted with the bid, proposal or quote.

## Section VIII – Budgets, Budget Revisions and Invoicing

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A budget will be submitted with the electronic single application showing the expense categories for the Department grant and the expense categories for any matching funds. The budget will be reviewed by the Department, and when approved, will be made a part of the grant contract with the Department.

### A. Budget Revisions

After the applicant has a fully executed grant contract, the original budget may require revision of certain budgeted line items to reflect changing circumstances. A request for a budget revision should be made to the Office of Workforce Development Program contact at the Department and should include the justification for the budget revision. A form/spreadsheet showing the original budget in one column and the proposed revised budget in a separate column should be included in the request. The Department will review the budget revision request and, if approved, send notice of approval as well as an updated requisition of funds document for invoicing. **Please Note: Budget revisions must be submitted to the Department at least sixty days prior to the expiration of the contract.**

### B. Invoices

This is a reimbursement-based grant; therefore, funds must be expended prior to requesting reimbursement. When requesting payment for grant funds, the official requisition form provided by the Department must be used. Supportive documentation that shows the funds were expended as requested must accompany the requisition form. When the final invoice is submitted, the remaining balance column should show no funds remaining.

All request for payment forms along with supporting documentation should be submitted electronically to Gwen Ross with the Office of Workforce Development, [gwross@pa.gov](mailto:gwross@pa.gov).

## **Section IX – Program Inquiries**

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Program inquiries should be directed to:

PA Department of Community and Economic Development  
Office of Workforce Development  
Gwen A. Ross, MPA  
Director of Workforce Development Initiatives  
Commonwealth Keystone Building  
400 North Street, 4th Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0225

Telephone: 717.720.7386  
Email: [gwross@pa.gov](mailto:gwross@pa.gov)

These guidelines can also be accessed online at [dced.pa.gov](http://dced.pa.gov).



## Appendix I – Supplemental Information

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When applying for a grant under this program, the applicant must complete the PA Department of Community and Economic Development Single Application for Assistance, and provide additional items that adequately address the application evaluation criteria in Section IV including:

**1. Apprenticeship and Training Office Certificate of Registration**

**2. Project Description**

A descriptive narrative shall describe a scope of work that does not exceed a three-year project period and includes the following information:

- a. Description of the Program sponsor, the industry of the Program, and the positions apprentices are training for.
- b. How the funds will impact the apprenticeship program.
- c. List of company(ies) involved.
- d. Description of the proposed training for which the requested funds will be used, including the number of apprentices to be trained.
- e. Description of how the classroom training will complement the on-the-job training.
- f. Outline the major milestones and anticipated completion dates of the proposed classroom training for which the requested funds will be used.
- g. Name and contact information for each employer included in the Program.

**3. Employer Commitment Letters**

At least one letter pledging each employer's commitment to the Program must be included with the proposal. If the employer is the sponsor, the employer should submit the letter.